

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Planning Board Technical Committee

FROM: Sarah Crawford
Transportation Planner, Department of Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: Ongoing Evaluation of the Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) Pilot Program of Technical Assistance Projects and Clearinghouse Web Site

DATE: September 7, 2007

TPB staff briefed the Technical Committee at its July 6 meeting on the status of the pilot phase of the TLC Program, and its intent to evaluate the technical assistance projects and regional clearinghouse components of this pilot phase of the Program.

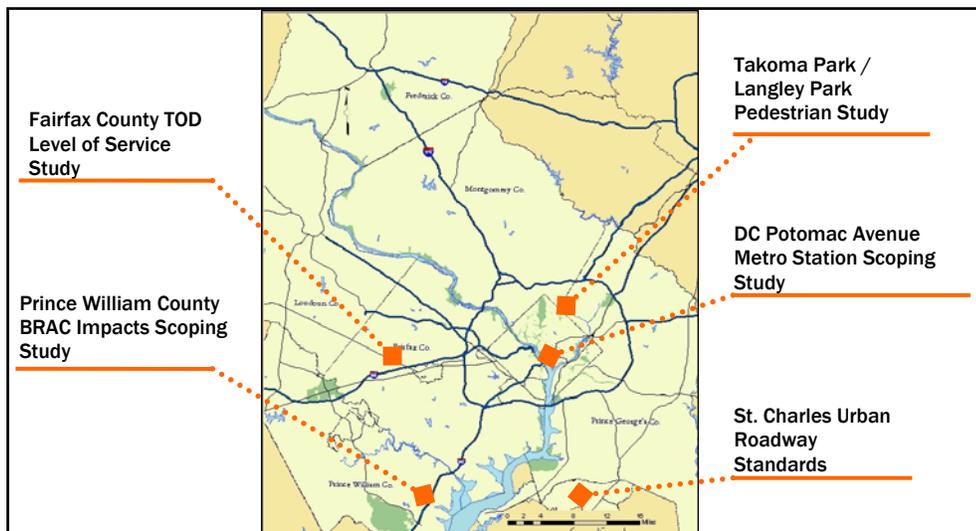
TPB staff has developed the attached series of questionnaires for technical assistance awardees, consultants, and stakeholder agencies who participated in the five location-specific projects. TPB staff is currently administering these questionnaires through phone interviews with the awardees, consultants, and stakeholder agencies. As of today, staff has spoken with about half of those listed on the attached spreadsheet. This memorandum details a summary of the responses obtained to date through this evaluation.

Current Status of the TLC Pilot Program

Five location-specific projects were included in the pilot phase of the TLC Program, as well as a sixth public presentation project. A brief summary of the status of these projects and the TLC Website and Regional Clearinghouse is provided below. More detailed information about these projects may be found on the TLC website under "Current Projects": <http://www.mwcog.org/tlc>.

- District of Columbia: Potomac Avenue Metro Station Scoping Study
This project was completed through the collaboration of various District agencies, as well as national partners with interests in this neighborhood. The resulting "Potomac Avenue Revitalization Strategy" for the future Neighborhood Plan is on the TLC website, along with a brief description of the project process.
- Langley Park/Takoma Park: Pedestrian Study
This study was completed through coordination with local, state (Maryland), and county agencies. The "Takoma/Langley Crossroads Pedestrian Access and Mobility Study" is the first piece of the Takoma/Langley Crossroads Sector Plan, which will commence this fall through M-NCPPC. The Study and brief description of the project process are online.

- St. Charles Urbanized Area: Urban Road Standards
 The Urban Road Standards designed for Charles County will fulfill the County’s goal of developing a dense, walkable environment in both the Waldorf Sub-area and Bryans Road Town Center. The Summary of Design Criteria and Intersection Plan Figures are posted on the TLC website, along with a brief description of the project process.
- Fairfax County: Level of Service around Transit Oriented Development Study
 The report, “Automobile Level of Service in Transit Station Areas: A Survey of Current Practice,” is in final editorial review. A brief description of the project process is currently online.
- Prince William County: Base Realignment and Closure Impacts Scoping Study
 The scope of work developed for Prince William County will allow the County to apply for federal funding for a planning study to analyze the impacts of the BRAC decision on the Potomac Communities section of the County. The scope of work, “Impacts of BRAC on the Potomac Communities,” is posted online with a brief description of the project process.



- Public Presentation on Density Issues
 A draft of the presentation, “Density and the Washington, D.C., Region,” is currently being reviewed by staff in Takoma Park and College Park. Once final, public meetings will be scheduled in these jurisdictions and the consultant will provide the presentation and conduct a discussion on local density issues.
- TLC Website and Regional Clearinghouse
 The TLC Website was launched in June and provides national best practices on linking land-use and transportation issues. Many local jurisdictions have reviewed the regional database for accuracy. TPB staff has updated the website as the projects conducted during the pilot phase of the TLC Program have been completed.

The level of funding for the TLC Program included as a “placeholder” in the FY 2008 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is the same as for FY 2007. The narrative currently included in the FY 2008 UPWP for the TLC Program is attached.

Evaluation Comments Received to date about the TLC Program

Comments received to date indicate that the TLC Program can serve a valuable function throughout the region. Because many jurisdictions are facing tightening budgets, small projects often remain unfunded. Many respondents expressed support for this type of small project technical assistance. The following discussion highlights some of the key ways in which the TLC Program can contribute to regional planning and decision-making, as well as some potential refinements and improvements to the current pilot program structure.

- **Bringing Key Partner Agencies and Stakeholders Together**
Most of the respondents discussed the ability of the TLC Program to gather partner agencies and stakeholders together to discuss a common subject. Several respondents said that conversations with partners would likely not have occurred had they initiated their project in house. The basis of participating in a regional technical assistance program encouraged them to think regionally and include a variety of local, state, and regional partners in the project. Similarly, by participating in the TLC Program, some respondents were better able to organize their in-house coordination by making sure there was representation at meetings from all relevant departments. Finally, respondents said that they learned the value of involving department and agency partners, as well as the public, in the project initiation phase of their normal programming efforts. All respondents agreed that they learned more about the programs and projects of partner agencies during the technical assistance project timeframe.
- **Pros and Cons of the Short Project Timeframes and Limited Budgets**
Many respondents felt that the short timeframe available for completion of the pilot round of the technical assistance projects was beneficial. Some said it helped focus the projects on one or two important tasks, and that the process could not afford to be delayed by attention to minor details. Because of this, some felt the short timeframe helped produce tailored, meaningful results for the localities. Conversely, some respondents said a longer timeframe for project completion would allow for a more in-depth review of policies and procedures for a locality, as well as time and energy left to incorporate a regional flavor in the projects. Additionally, respondents added that it was difficult to coordinate the schedules of all partners during the short project time. They said more time would allow for more contacts to be made with partners and greater levels of participation in the project. Many of those interviewed felt that the products could be improved through increasing the amount of assistance provided to each technical assistance project. Some commented that increased funding per project would allow for more meaningful projects and more fully developed products and conclusions.
- **TLC Project Application and Selection Process**
Some respondents suggested that applications would be more compelling and projects would be better if the TPB encourages a jurisdiction to collaborate with partners in

developing the application for technical assistance. Along the same lines, it would be helpful to all partners if the TPB could articulate why some projects receive priority over others; this could simply mean clarifying the goals of the program with respect to project selection. Additionally, many agency partners asked to receive early information about the projects, perhaps before they are selected, so that they may check with their departments to be sure that the right people are involved in each project. This would also entail agency partners sharing information about past and current projects so that the TPB may select TLC technical assistance projects using the best information available.

- Perspectives of TLC Consultants

Several consultants who were interviewed said they believed future consultants would benefit from an overview of the TLC Program before beginning the project. Many said they learned about the overall goals of the program as they were conducting the projects, and they felt that future products could be improved through an overview of TLC concepts. Consultants also commented on the timeliness of the gathering of materials. Because these projects were completed in such a short timeframe, the consultants encouraged TPB staff to ask localities to gather necessary project background information, data, and relevant materials from partners before the initial project meetings.

- The TLC Website and Regional Clearinghouse

Many respondents had visited the TLC website and Regional Clearinghouse. While they generally found it to be a useful tool, some offered some suggestions for improvement to the site. One comment mentioned that additional search functionality for the whole site, like an index or keyword search, would be useful. Several respondents suggested continually updating the website with the status of the technical assistance program during each round of funding. After each round of funding, it would be helpful to track each of the projects and provide follow-up information as aspects of the projects are implemented.

- Regional Applicability and Benefits

Many respondents commented on the regional applicability of the projects in which they were involved. Several commented that the products resulting from some of the technical assistance grants would be valuable to jurisdictions across the region facing similar issues. Other respondents discussed the regional appeal of having a database of current projects that address local issues from a regional perspective. Some respondents said the TLC Program represents an important regional program that will produce a valuable library of resources for the region as the TPB completes more technical assistance projects. A respondent from Charles County said their project demonstrated that a small, outer jurisdiction can get a lot out of the regional TLC Program. While Charles County would likely have completed this project in house within several years, they were able to use the TLC Program to quickly develop urban roadway standards that fit seamlessly into a current planning process.

Technical Committee Comments and Feedback

The TPB Technical Committee is being asked to review the comments provided in this memorandum, and to suggest any refinements to the evaluation process or additional evaluation activities that would assist the TPB in assessing the value of the TLC Program. Committee members will have the opportunity to provide staff with such feedback during the two weeks following the September 7 meeting. Please have all comments to Darren Smith (dsmith@mwkog.org, 202-962-3273) or Sarah Crawford (scrawford@mwkog.org, 202-962-3237) by September 21, 2007.

FY 2008 Phase of the TLC Program

TPB staff will complete the evaluation in the coming weeks. Staff plans to develop recommendations to the TPB for the FY 2008 phase of the program based on common themes in the evaluations, as well as input from the Technical Committee. The Technical Committee will be briefed on October 5 on the completed evaluation of the pilot round of the TLC Program, and on draft staff recommendations for the next phase of the TLC Program.

At its October 17 meeting, the TPB is scheduled to receive a briefing on the evaluation of the TLC Program and to act on recommendations for conducting the FY 2008 phase of the TLC Program within the Unified Planning Work Program.

1. PLAN SUPPORT

H. TRANSPORTATION/LAND USE CONNECTION (TLC) PROGRAM

SAFETEA-LU stresses the importance of coordination between land use and transportation planning. This work activity was implemented as a pilot in November 2006. It created a clearinghouse to document local and state experiences with land use and transportation coordination, and offered short-term technical assistance through a consultant team to local jurisdictions to advance their coordination activities. The technical assistance provided to a locality will be specified on a task order basis for the consultant team and will be limited to \$20,000 per project.

This is a budget placeholder with a similar funding level as in FY 2007. In July 2007, after the demand for technical assistance is known and the efficacy of the pilot can be evaluated, it is anticipated that the work scope and budget will be revised.

Oversight:	TPB Technical Committee
Cost Estimate:	\$255,000
Products:	A web-based clearinghouse of information on experiences throughout the region, and technical assistance provided by a consultant team to localities that request services to advance their land use and transportation planning activities.
Schedule:	Technical assistance September 2007-June 2008

TPB Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program
FY07 Pilot Technical Assistance Program
Awardee Questionnaire

Person interviewed _____

Date _____

Jurisdiction _____

1. Through your participation in the TLC Program, was your jurisdiction able to accomplish something you otherwise would not have been able to accomplish (or accomplish as quickly)? Please explain.

2. Drawing on your experience with the TLC Program through your technical assistance project, please share your thoughts on how the program could be improved in future rounds. Use the following questions as a guide, but feel free to include other comments as necessary:

- *Application Process:* Were the application process and expectations for your submission clear as you prepared to apply for TLC funding?

- *Consultant Selection and Performance:* Do you think the consultant selected was an appropriate match for your project? If not, how might the selection process be improved? Are you satisfied with that firm's performance?

- *Project Limitations:* Was the amount of technical assistance provided and the time allotted for its performance sufficient for the work proposed, and for making a significant contribution to your jurisdiction's efforts? Were there any gaps in the assistance provided?

- *Project Management:* Was the role and involvement of TPB staff appropriate for the needs of the project?

- *Other Suggestions for Improving the Program:*

3. a. Although it may be difficult to evaluate outcomes at this early stage, what do you see as the short-term benefits and potential long-term benefits of this project for your locality. What is your opinion on the effectiveness of the TLC Program for the region as a whole?

3. b. How did this project contribute to improving the coordination of land-use and transportation planning in your jurisdiction?

4. How likely are you or your jurisdiction to apply for technical assistance in future rounds of the TLC Program?

5. Have you visited the TLC Program Website at www.mwcog.org/tlc?
(If yes, please answer the following questions, if no, please consider briefly visiting the site in order to complete the rest of this questionnaire.)

- Is the “TLC Clearinghouse” information on the site useful to you?
- Is the information about your project under “Current Projects” accurate and complete?
- Do you have any suggestions for improvements to the site?

TPB Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program
FY07 Pilot Technical Assistance Program
Consultant Questionnaire

Person interviewed _____ Date _____

Company / Project _____ / _____

3. a. Do you believe that the project in which you were involved helped the local agency client(s) accomplish something they otherwise would not have been able to accomplish (or accomplish as quickly)? Please explain.

1. b. Did you feel the project advanced the goals of the TLC Program to promote the integration of land-use and transportation actions by local governments?

4. Please share your thoughts on how the TLC Program could be improved in future rounds. Use the following questions as a guide, but feel free to include other comments as necessary:

- *Procurement Process:* Were expectations of you as a consultant reasonable, as far as the information you were asked to provide and the time you were asked to commit in advance of being awarded a contract?

- *Project Limitations:* Was the amount of technical assistance provided and the time allotted for its performance sufficient for the work expected, and for making a significant contribution to the efforts of the local agency clients?

- *Project Management:* Was the role and involvement of TPB staff appropriate for the needs of the project, particularly regarding facilitating communication between you and the local agency clients?

- *Other Suggestions for Improving the Program:*

3. If asked to submit a proposal for a future TLC technical assistance project, how likely is your company to submit a proposal? Are there potential changes to the TLC Program that may influence your decision?

4. Have you visited the TLC Program Website at www.mwcog.org/tlc?
(If yes, please answer the following questions, if no, please consider briefly visiting the site in order to complete the rest of this questionnaire.)

- Is the “TLC Clearinghouse” information on the site useful to you?
- Is the information under “Current Projects” about the project(s) in which you were involved accurate and complete?
- Do you have any suggestions for improvements to the site?

TPB Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program
FY07 Pilot Technical Assistance Program
Agency Stakeholder Questionnaire

Person interviewed _____ Date _____

Agency / Project _____ / _____

5. You have been asked to complete this survey as a stakeholder in a TLC Program technical assistance project in the 2007 pilot round. Do feel that you and your agency were adequately involved in this project? Please explain.

6. If a future TLC technical assistance project is relevant to the work of your agency, at what time should your agency be involved? (Check as many as apply)

- a. During the selection of projects for inclusion in the TLC Program
- b. During the procurement of consultants for the project
- c. At project “kick-off” meetings
- d. At project management meetings
- e. At public meetings regarding the project
- f. During review of draft products/reports for the project

7. Was the TLC project in which you were involved helpful or counter-productive to the work of your agency? Please explain.

8. Please share any other thoughts on how the TLC Program could be improved in future rounds.

9. Have you visited the TLC Program Website at www.mwcog.org/tlc?

(If yes, please answer the following questions, if no, please consider briefly visiting the site in order to complete the rest of this questionnaire.)

- Is the “TLC Clearinghouse” information on the site useful to you?

- Is the information under “Current Projects” about the project or projects in which you were involved accurate and complete?

- Do you have any suggestions for improvements to the site?

<i>Awardees</i>				
Name	Agency	Project	Email	Phone
Aldea Douglas	MNCPPC-PG Co	Langley Park	aldea.douglas@mncppc.org	301-952-3574
Malaika Abernathy	(formerly MNCPPC-Mgy. Co)	Langley Park		
Rick Canizales	Prince William Co. Dept. of Transportation	Prince William BRAC	rcanizales@pwcgov.org	703-792-5985
Pat Thomas	Prince William Co. Dept. of Planning	Prince William BRAC	pthomas1@pwcgov.org	703-792-7058
Dan Rathbone	Fairfax Co. Dept. of Transportation	Fairfax TOD LOS	daniel.rathbone@fairfaxcounty.gov	703-324-1417
Leonard Wolfenstein	Fairfax Co. Dept. of Transportation	Fairfax TOD LOS	leonard.wolfenstein@fairfaxcounty.gov	
Jason Groth	Chas. Co. Dept. of Transportation	St. Charles Road Standards	GrothJ@charlescounty.org	301-396-5814
Amy Blessinger	Chas. Co. Dept. of Planning & Growth Mgmt.	St. Charles Road Standards	blessinga@charlescounty.org	301-645-0650
Jeff Davis	District of Columbia Office of Planning	Potomac Ave. Metro Scoping	jeff.davis@dc.gov	202-442-7704
<i>Consultants</i>				
Name	Company	Project	Email	Phone
Dan Goodman	Toole Design Group	Langley Park	dgoodman@tooledesign.com	301-927-1900
Jennifer Toole	Toole Design Group	Langley Park	jtoole@tooledesign.com	301-927-1900
Larry Marcus	ATCS, PLC.	Prince William BRAC	lmarcus@atcsplc.com	703-430-7500
Emily Wasley	ATCS, PLC.	Prince William BRAC	ewasley@atcsplc.com	703-430-7500
Lora Byala	AG Samuel Group	Prince William BRAC	lbyala@agsamuel.com	301-774-4566
Kelly Clifton	U. of Md., National Center for Smart Growth	Fairfax TOD LOS	kclifton@umd.edu	301-405-1945
Charlie O'Connell	VHB	St. Charles Road Standards	COConnell@VHB.com	(703)847-3071
Chris Gay	VHB	St. Charles Road Standards	CGay@VHB.com	(703)847-3071
Will Schroeer	ICF Consulting	Potomac Ave. Metro Scoping	wshroeer@icfi.com	612 928 0788
Linda Bailey	ICF Consulting	Potomac Ave. Metro Scoping	lbailey@icfi.com	202-862-1171
<i>Involved Agency Representatives</i>				
Name	Agency	Project	Email	Phone
Stephanie Yanovitz	Maryland SHA	Langley Park	syanovitz@sha.state.md.us	410-545-5656
Jennifer Weeks	consultant representing MTA	Langley Park	jweeks1@mtamaryland.com	410-767-3788
Ilona Blanchard	City of Takoma Park	Langley Park	ilonab@takomaqov.org	301-891-7205
Lyn Erickson	MDOT	Langley Park	lerickson@mdot.state.md.us	410-865-1279
Shiva Shrestha	Maryland SHA	Langley Park	SShrestha@sha.state.md.us	410-545-5667
Chris Delfs	DDOT	Potomac Ave. Metro Scoping	Christopher.Delfs@dc.gov	202-671-1598
Natasha Goguts	DDOT	Potomac Ave. Metro Scoping	natasha.goguts@dc.gov	202-671-4605
Ask Jeff to recommend other active stakeholders		Potomac Ave. Metro Scoping		